

## An Important Message from Jennifer Toth, Deputy Director for Transportation

### *A Lesson in Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Tips as Kids Head Back to School*

Most Arizona children head back to school in August, so you've probably noticed an increase in traffic – and more kids on streets and sidewalks.

As you're driving, watch for children as they walk and bike to and from school. Kids can be unpredictable, so anticipate they might dart into the path of your vehicle. *Slow down*, especially on residential streets and near schools, and *be prepared to stop*.

#### **Parents and guardians:**

- Teach and reinforce the importance of walking and biking safely, including the basics of looking both ways before crossing a street and always using cross walks. The [National Center for Safe Routes to School](#) program provides a [handout for parents to share with children](#) with tips for getting to school safely. Take a few minutes to review it with the kids in your family.
- Check out the route your child takes to school. Walk or bicycle it with your child and identify potential safety hazards along the way. Point out the safe places to cross the street, as well as driveways or alleys where kids should look out for vehicles entering the roadway.
- Don't allow children to use headphones or mobile devices to talk, text, play games or watch videos when walking or bicycling. Children need to keep their eyes and ears focused on their surroundings, watching especially for drivers who might not see them.
- Require children to wear a properly fitting helmet if they ride a bike to and from school.

**Next Month:** Child Safety Seats and an update on Arizona's 2014 Strategic Highway Safety Plan

Thank you,

